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CATALOGUE

OF

LITHOGRAPHS

BY

J. McN. WHISTLER

EXHIBITED AT
THE GROLIER CLUB
APRIL 4TH TO APRIL 27TH
1907

SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTION
510.

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WHISTLER'S LITHOGRAPHS

THE art of James McNeill Whistler is best known through his oil paintings and etchings, but he made use of other mediums; namely, water color, pastel and lithography. He was always very much interested in technical processes and when he took up the lithographer's stone in the late seventies he tested its possibilities with enthusiasm. It was suited to his taste and to his resources as an artist. When he made a drawing he thought more of terse suggestion than of the elaborate definition of detail, and he found that in lithography he could make a kind of drawing expressing perfectly his ideas of substance and

atmosphere. His early lithographs, like some of the most famous of his early etchings, were river scenes made along the Thames. As he progressed in the study of the medium he took a wider range and drew on the stone, figures, portraits, scenes in cities, and other subjects, all of which will be found represented in this exhibition.

Whistler enjoyed making experiments and when he added lithography to his accomplishments he did not take over an old method and use it conventionally, but endeavoured to find out all that could be made of this branch of art, and to be as individual in his employment of it as he was in painting or in etching. Sometimes he used the familiar lithographer's stone of commerce. On other occasions he used the transfer paper which is equally well-known to artists. Whichever he used he made subservient to

his own conception of lithography and a source of new effects. When he began to make lithographs they left little impression upon the public, though some of them were issued with a short-lived magazine, "Piccadilly," which circulated, if only to a limited extent, among people supposed to care for such things. Whether he was discouraged or not, Whistler confined his attention for several years to the processes by which he chiefly won his fame; but after a while he returned to the stone and henceforth, down to within five or six years of his death, he used it, off and on, producing a considerable number of subjects.

Collectors began to appreciate his work and lithographs which, when published at all, had fetched a small price or were practically neglected, were gathered into portfolios by dis-

cerning amateurs. To-day Whistler's lithographs are growing rare. For this reason, as well as for the intrinsic interest of the works it contains, this exhibition is offered for public consideration.

CATALOGUE

CATALOGUE

The "W" and numbers following it, refer to Way's Catalogue of Whistler's Lithographs

1	Study	W. 1
2	Study	W. 2
3	Study	W. 3
4	Limehouse	W. 4
5	Nocturne	W. 5
6	The Toilet	W. 6a
7	Early Morning. First State	W. 7a
8	Early Morning. Second State	
9	The Broad Bridge	W. 8

10	The Tall Bridge	W. 9
11	Gaiety Stage Door	W. 10
12	Victoria Club	W. 11
13	Old Battersea Bridge	W. 12
14	Reading. First State	W. 13a
15	Reading. Second State	
16	The Fan	W. 14
17	Study	W. 15
18	Entrance Gate	W. 16
19	Churchyard	W. 17
20	Little Court, Cloth Fair	W. 18
21	Lindsay Row, Chelsea	W. 19
22	Chelsea Shops	W. 20
23	Drury Lane Rags	W. 21
24	Chelsea Rags	W. 22

25	Courtyard, Chelsea Hospital	w. 23
26	The Farriers	w. 24
27	The Winged Hat	w. 25
28	Gants de Suède	w. 26
29	The Tyresmith	w. 27
30	Maunder's Fish-shop, Chelsea	w. 28
31	The Little Nude Model Reading	w. 29
32	The Dancing Girl	w. 30
33	Model Draping	w. 31
34	The Horoscope	w. 32
35	The Novel. Girl Reading	w. 33
36	Gatti's	w. 34
37	Hotel Colbert, Windows	w. 35
38	Cocks and Hens, Hotel Colbert	w. 36

39	Staircase	W. 37
40	The Garden	W. 38
41	Vitré—The Canal	W. 39
42	The Market Place, Vitré	W. 40
43	Gabled Roofs	W. 41
44	The Clock-makers, Paimpol	W. 42
45	The Steps, Luxembourg	W. 43
46	Conversation under the Statue, Luxembourg Gardens	W. 44
47	The Pantheon, from the Terrace of the Luxembourg Gardens	W. 45
48	The Draped Figure Seated	W. 46
49	Nude Model Reclining	W. 47
50	Nursemaids. "Les Bonnes du Luxembourg"	W. 48

51	The Long Balcony	W. 49
52	The Little Balcony	W. 50
53	Little Draped Figure Leaning	W. 51
54	The Long Gallery, Louvre	W. 52
55	The Whitesmiths, Impasse des Carmélites	W. 53
56	Tête-à-tête in the Garden	W. 54
57	The Terrace, Luxembourg	W. 55
58	The Little Café au Bois	W. 56
59	Late Picquet	W. 57
60	The Laundress—La Blanchisseuse de la Place Dauphine	W. 58
61	Rue Furstenburg	W. 59
62	Confidences in the Garden	W. 60
63	La Jolie New Yorkaise	W. 61

64	La Belle Dame Paresseuse	w. 62
65	La Belle Jardinière	w. 63
66	The Duet	w. 64
67	The Duet. No. 2	w. 65
68	Stéphane Mallarmé	w. 66
68a	The Draped Figure, Back View	w. 67
69	La Robe Rouge	w. 68
70	La Belle Dame Endormie	w. 69
71	La Fruitière de la Rue de Grenelle	w. 70
72	The Sisters	w. 71
73	The Forge. Passage du Dragon	w. 72
74	The Forge. Passage du Dragon. First State	w. 72a

75	The Smith. Passage du Dragon	w. 73
76	The Priest's House, Rouen	w. 74
77	Portrait of Miss Howells	w. 75
77a	The Same, with variations in the work	w. 75a
77b	The Same, with other variations	w. 75b
78	Figure Study	w. 76
79	Study	w. 77
80	The Doctor	w. 78
81	Walter Sickert	w. 79
82	Mother and Child. No. 1	w. 80
83	Back of the Gaiety Theatre	w. 81
84	Girl with Bowl	w. 82
85	The Little Doorway, Lyme Regis	w. 83

86	The Master Smith	w. 84
87	The Sunny Smithy	w. 85
88	The Good Shoe	w. 86
89	Father and Son	w. 87
90	The Smith's Yard	w. 88
91	The Strong Arm	w. 89
92	The Blacksmith	w. 90
93	The Brothers	w. 91
94	The Fair	w. 92
95	John Grove	w. 93
96	The Little Steps, Lyme Regis	w. 94
97	Study of a Horse	w. 95
98	Sunday—Lyme Regis	w. 96
99	Fifth of November	w. 97
100	The Old Smith's Story	w. 98

101	Figure Study in Colours	W. 99
102	Red House, Paimpol	W. 100
103	Yellow House, Lannion	W. 101
104	Mother and Child, No. 2	W. 102
105	Firelight	W. 103
106	Firelight. Joseph Pennell. No. 1	W. 104
107	Firelight. Joseph Pennell. No. 2	W. 105
108	The Barber's Shop in the Mews	W. 106
109	Study. No. 1	W. 107
110	Study. No. 2	W. 108
111	Kensington Gardens	W. 109
112	Little Evelyn	W. 110
113	Study. Joseph Pennell	W. 111

114	The Russian Schube	W. 112
115	Needlework	W. 113
116	The Manager's Window, Gaiety Theatre	W. 114
117	Little Dorothy	W. 115
118	Portrait Study	W. 116
119	Portrait Study	W. 117
120	Savoy Pigeons	W. 118
121	Evening—Little Waterloo Bridge	W. 119
122	Charing Cross Railway Bridge	W. 120
123	Little London	W. 121
124	The Siesta	W. 122
125	Waterloo Bridge	W. 123
126	By the Balcony	W. 124
127	The Thames	W. 125

128	The Thames. First State	w. 125a
128a	The Same, with further variations	w. 125b
129	St. Anne's, Soho	w. 126
130	Sketch of Mr. Henley	w. 127
131	The Butcher's Dog	w. 128
132	St. Giles-in-the-Fields	w. 129
133	Little London Model	w. 130
134	Study: Maude Seated	w. 131
135	Old Battersea Bridge. No. 2	w. 132
136	The Fireplace	w. 133
137	Mother and Child. No. 3	w. 134
138	Mother and Child. No. 4	w. 135
139	Mother and Child. No. 5	w. 136
140	Count Robert de Montesquiou	w. 137

141	Count Robert de Montesquiou, No. 2	W. 138
142	Count Robert de Montesquiou, No. 3	W. 139
143	The Garden Porch	W. 140
144	The Man with a Sickle	W. 141
145	Portrait of Dr. Whistler	W. 142
146	Unfinished Sketch of Lady Haden	W. 143
147	Sketches of Miss Philip and Mr. A. Studd	W. 144
148	Sketch of a Blacksmith	W. 145
149	Sketch, Grand Rue, Dieppe	W. 146
150	Afternoon Tea	W. 147
151	La Danseuse. A Study of the Nude	W. 148

152	Portrait Study. Miss Charlotte R. Williams	W. 149
153	Stéphane Mallarmé. No. 2	W. 150
154	The Shoemaker	W. 151
155	A Lady Seated	W. 152
156	The Medici Collar	W. 153
157	Nude Model, Standing	W. 154
158	Draped Figure, Standing	W. 155
159	Draped Figure, Reclining	W. 156
160	Lady and Child	W. 157

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